

During August, C. A. Pinelli, G. Biasin and G. Castelli climbed it after a difficult ascent which required three camps.

PIETRO MECIANI, *Club Alpino Italiano*

Khawaja Muhammed Group. An expedition from Munich, led by Dr. Axel von Hillebrandt and made up of Jochen Edrich, Dr. Erwin Grötzbach, Hans Huber, Rainer Köfferlein and Ekke Rübél, climbed a peak of c. 18,375 feet, which they called Koh-e-München, and 17 others.

Iblar Valley. Another German expedition from Garmisch-Partenkirchen was led by Thomas Trübswetter. From July 4 to 13, they climbed all the significant peaks in the Iblar Valley, all twelve over 16,400 feet and two, more than 19,685 feet (6000 meters). The other members were J. Trübswetter, Gazert, Holch and Speer.

China

Keeping the facts straight on Minya Konka. My comment has been invited on the statement in the book *The Conquest of Minya Konka* by Shih Chan-Chun, Peking, 1959, which on page 53 reads as follows in reference to our 1932 Minya Konka expedition. "They claimed that Moore and Birdsall reached the summit where they planted the American flag amidst a violent snowstorm and that flag was left there as evidence of America's success in distant conquest . . . It is regrettable that we were unable to discover any traces left by the Americans on top."

Mr. Shih Chan-Chun appears as the author, but the important fact may well be that the English actually comes from the Chinese "translated by Huang Kai-Ping", as is stated on the overleaf of its second inside page. This would seem to be significant. For Mr. Shih Chan-Chun, leader of the 1957 Chinese climbing expedition, has elsewhere been quoted quite differently on the subject of our 1932 expedition. "Minya Konka was first climbed in 1932 by an American Expedition. Four American climbers made the attempt, and two of them, Birdsall and Moore, reached the top . . . Their illustrated book gives the very best detailed description of Minya Konka." (See *A.A.J.*, 1958, 11:1, pp. 125-128, where the matter is covered with yet further references.)

There are three basic mistakes in translator Huang Kai-Ping's choice of English about our expedition: 1. "*Snowstorm*". The weather was clear; there was no snowstorm during our visit to the summit of Minya Konka. The visibility was unrestricted; we so reported, and our summit photographs confirm. 2. "*Flag left on top*". We left nothing whatever on top and never implied having done so. We brought the Chinese flag we carried with us back to the Academia Sinica in Nanking; and as is well known to all visitors, returned the American flag to New York where it

has been hanging, framed, on the American Alpine Clubroom walls for all the 32 years since. We left nothing because Minya Konka's is a narrow, névé-crowned summit without any approachable nearby rock outcrop. It is strongly windblasted with an active working cornice (treacherous too) overhanging to the east. This became evident through field glasses on reconnaissance in advance of the climb. Small objects left on the summit would not survive long. Only an overlapping summit panorama of photographs would provide worthwhile evidence of our visit; and these we did bring back. (See our book *Men Against the Clouds*.) 3. "America's success in distant conquest". We climbed Minya Konka only with the kind permission of the Chinese government at Nanking, carrying with us its emblem (the only one then recognized by all the nations of the world, including the League of Nations and the USSR) which, by prior agreement, we flew first by itself before flying our own. The photograph of this Chinese flag was later carried by the Chinese press as evidence that the Republic of China was in control of our expedition — whose most interesting scientific objective was to investigate and establish or permanently put to rest recurring reports that Everest might be exceeded in height by Mounts Amne Machin or Minya Konka.

One wishes there were some way that this message, together with our congratulations and good wishes, might somehow be conveyed directly to Mr. Shin Chan-Chun and his friends, without intervention of translators.

TERRIS MOORE

EUROPE

First American Ascent of the Grépon. Additional information corrects the note in *A.A.J.*, 1944, 5:2, p. 309. An undated ascent in the period 1900-03 by Charles Robert Cross (A.A.C.). In 1907, Homer A. Rogers (*A.A.J.*, 1959, 11:2, p. 271). In 1909, J. Duke Smith (traverse), undated but probably before Oliver Perry-Smith (first American guideless leader) shortly before August 31. In 1911 Joseph Cooke Smith (traverse).

J. MONROE THORINGTON, M.D.

Rocher du Midi, Massif de la Chartreuse, France. From June 8 to 10, Gary Hemming, with the Scot Stewart Fulton, made a new route of extreme difficulty to the right of the French route on the east face of the Rocher du Midi.

AFRICA

Mount Kenya. The Englishman Barry Cliff and the Austrians Siegfried Aeberli and Dr. Heinrich Klier made the first ascent of the difficult east face of Mount Kenya in August. They have rated this as a grade VI climb, comparable to the most difficult in the Alps.